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Charles Cotesworth Pinckney Speech in the South Carolina Convention, 18 January 1788 (excerpt)

. . . With regard to the objection that had been made to the mode of electing the president of the United States, gen. Pinckney asked what other mode would have been so proper? if he was to be elected by the house of representatives and the senate, as one of them have the power of impeaching and the other of trying him, he would be altogether their creature, and would not have independence enough to exercise with firmness, the revisionary power and other authorities with which he is invested by the constitution? this want of independence might influence his conduct in some degree if he was to be elected by one branch of the legislature alone; but as he is to be elected by the people, through the medium of electors chosen particularly for that purpose, and he is in some measure to be a check on the senate and house of representatives, the election, in my opinion, could not have been placed so well if it had been made in any other mode. In all elections of a chief magistrate, foreign influence is to be guarded against; here it is carefully so, as it is almost impossible for any foreign power to influence thirteen different sets of electors, distributed throughout the states, from New-Hampshire to Georgia; by this mode also, and for the same reason, the dangers of intrigue and corruption are avoided, and a variety of other inconveniencies which must have arisen if the electors from the different states had been directed to assemble in one place, or if either branch of the legislature (in case the majority of electors did not fix upon the same person) might have chosen a president who had not been previously put in nomination by the people. . . .

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